

Calendar No. 2292

85TH CONGRESS }
2d Session }

SENATE }

REPORT
No. 2238

S. 4153 *File*

AUTHORIZING THE DELIVERY OF SEWAGE FROM VIRGINIA INTO THE SEWERAGE SYSTEM OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AND THE TREATMENT OF SUCH SEWAGE

AUGUST 7, 1958.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. MORSE, from the Committee on the District of Columbia, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 4153]

The Committee on the District of Columbia, to whom was referred the bill (S. 4153), to authorize the delivery of sewage from Virginia into the sewerage system of the District of Columbia and the treatment of such sewage, and for other purposes, after full consideration, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

The purpose of this bill is to authorize the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, in their discretion, from time to time, to enter into and renew agreements, for such periods as they deem advisable, with the proper authorities of the State of Virginia, to provide for the drainage of sewage originating in Virginia into the sewerage system of the District of Columbia for treatment and disposal. The bill provides further that the Virginia authorities shall pay all or part of the cost of construction and maintenance of the facilities necessary as determined in the individual agreements.

A hearing was held on the bill on August 6, 1958, during the course of which favorable testimony was received from the District officials (including the Engineer Commissioner, the Director of Sanitary Engineering, the Director of Public Health Engineering and an Assistant Corporation Counsel) and the county executive of Fairfax County, Va. Favorable written reports on the bill were filed by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of the Army.

A letter dated July 29, 1958, from the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, addressed to the chairman of the committee, is made herewith a part of the report:

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DELIVERY OF SEWAGE FROM VIRGINIA

JULY 29, 1958.

Hon. ALAN BIBLE,
*Chairman, Committee on the District of Columbia,
United States Senate, Washington, D. C.*

MY DEAR SENATOR BIBLE: The Commissioners of the District of Columbia have for report S. 4153, a bill to authorize the delivery of sewage from Virginia into the sewerage system of the District of Columbia and the treatment of such sewage, and for other purposes.

The pollution of the Potomac River in the Washington metropolitan area has been of great concern to all communities involved. As a result, each of the many political jurisdictions has in one form or another constructed facilities to improve conditions. Engineering analyses of the disposal problems confronting the various areas have shown in some cases separate treatment plants to be preferable and in others that the treatment of sewage from two or more jurisdictions in a single plant would yield community benefits.

Typical of the latter is the arrangement between Alexandria and Fairfax County, and the agreement between the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission and the District of Columbia.

It now appears that important benefits both as to river water quality and economy of construction and treatment may be achieved by the connection of one or more drainage areas in Fairfax County to the sewerage system of the District of Columbia. In order that this may be accomplished, the District of Columbia must be authorized to enter into a suitable agreement with the county. The passage of S. 4153 is essential for this purpose.

While authorizing the necessary agreement, the bill does not attempt to fix rigid terms and conditions under which the sewer service would be provided. It recites in general language the various considerations which would necessarily be embodied in such an agreement, leaving the particulars for equitable determination by the parties as their respective interests may dictate. This is of particular importance because certain of the facilities in the District's sewerage system which would handle Fairfax sewage will have been constructed at least in part through the use of funds contributed to the District by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission under the terms of the agreement between the latter two entities.

While S. 4153 is prompted by an immediate disposal problem confronting Fairfax County, its terms are such as to make possible similar arrangements between other Virginia entities and the District should such prove desirable at any future time. Therefore, the bill may be regarded as a significant step in facilitating cooperation among the Washington metropolitan communities as they progressively attempt to meet the problems which they must solve as growth continues.

The Commissioners urge the passage of the bill in the strongest possible terms.

Time does not permit ascertaining the views of the Bureau of the Budget as to the relationship of this report to the program of the President.

Yours very sincerely,

ROBERT E. McLAUGHLIN,
President, Board of Commissioners, D. C.

Enactment of this bill will involve only a nominal cost to the District of Columbia, since the work will be done on a reimbursable basis, according to the testimony of the Engineer Commissioner.

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